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OPERATION STREETSWEEPER

FUGITIVE CONVICTED FOR CRACK DISTRIBUTION

CONCORD, NEW HAMPSHIRE – United States Attorney Tom Colantuono and Manchester Police Chief John Jaskolka today announced that Victor Alejandro Garza, 36, of Reynosa, Mexico, was convicted in United States District Court in Concord, New Hampshire, for possessing and distributing “crack” cocaine.

Garza was previously arrested by the Nashua Police Department in Nashua, New Hampshire, on November 20, 1990 for selling cocaine. He was subsequently convicted on state charges and served a three to six year sentence in New Hampshire State Prison in Concord.

Garza was convicted of selling “crack” cocaine to an undercover officer and government witness in Manchester, New Hampshire, on two separate occasions in June 1996. Although Garza was indicted by a federal grand jury on July 10, 1996, and despite repeated efforts by the United Marshals Service to locate Garza, he remained a fugitive until his arrest in McAllen, Texas by the U.S. Border Patrol on February 13, 2004. Garza was apprehended trying to re-enter the United States. Garza was subsequently transported from Texas by the United Marshals Service to Concord where he stood trial.

Garza's convictions stem from “Operation Streetsweeper,” an initiative conducted jointly by the New Hampshire State Police Narcotics Investigations Unit, the New Hampshire State Police Forensics Laboratory, the Manchester Police and the United States Attorney's Office.

U.S. Attorney Colantuono stated, “The prosecution of this case represents the continuing efforts of federal, state, and local law enforcement, working jointly with the United States Attorney’s Office, to successfully prosecute these cases — no matter how much time passes or how long it may take.”

Sentencing is scheduled before Judge Steven McAuliffe on September 21, 2004 at 9:30 a.m. This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Mark Irish.